

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
TRSE-00 /061 W  
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R 231430Z FEB 78  
FM AMCONSUL GENOA  
TO AMEMBASSY ROME  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2165  
AMCONSUL NAPLES  
AMCONSUL MILAN  
AMCONSUL PALERMO  
AMCONSUL FLORENCE

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E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: SAN REMO CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AGREE TO PROGRAMMATIC  
MAJORITY WITH THE COMMUNISTS

BEGIN SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE DEFECTION OF THREE MORE OF HIS  
OWN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) COUNCILMEN, MAYOR OSVALDO  
VENTO AGREED, OVER THE WEEK-END, TO ACCEPT COMMUNIST  
(PCI) SUPPORT TO KEEP HIS MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION  
(GIUNTA) AFLOAT. IF THE ACCORD IS RATIFIED BY THE DC  
PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE OF IMPERIA ON FEBRUARY 27, AND IF,  
SUBSEQUENTLY, THE GIUNTA SURVIVES A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE,  
SAN REMO WILL BECOME THE FIRST CITY IN LIGURIA TO EXPERIMENT  
WITH A DC-PCI "PROGRAMMATIC" MAJORITY. MAYOR VENTO IS TRYING  
TO MINIMIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACCORD, ARGUING THAT IS  
PROGRAMMATIC RATHER THAN POLITICAL AND DOES NOT INVOLVE PCI  
PARTICIPATION IN THE GIUNTA ITSELF. HIS LIGURIAN PARTY  
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COLLEAGUES AND CHIEFTAINS DO NOT AGREE, HOWEVER, AND FEAR  
THAT SAN REMO'S PRECEDENT SHATTERING DEAL, WILL, IF ALLOWED  
TO STAND, BE IMITATED ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION. END SUMMARY

1. IMPERIA PROVINCE, OF WHICH SAN REMO IS THE LARGEST CITY,  
WAS THE ONLY PROVINCE IN LIGURIA WHERE IN THE 1975 LOCAL ELECTIONS  
THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS RETAINED BOTH A PLURALITY OF THE

VOTE AND GOVERNMENT RULE. (THE REGION AND THE OTHER THREE PROVINCES ARE RULED BY COMMUNIST/SOCIALIST GIUNTE) IN SAN REMO ITSELF, THE DC WON AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF THE SEATS (21 OF 40). DEFECTIONS SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, HAVE WHITTLED AWAY THAT STRENGTH TO THE POINT WHERE THE RECENT DECISION OF THREE ADDITIONAL COUNCILMEN TO LEAVE THE PARTY DEPRIVED VENTO'S DC-LED GIUNTA OF THE NECESSARY MAJORITY TO GOVERN. THE DC WAS THUS CONFRONTED WITH THE CHOICE OF EITHER GOING INTO OPPOSITION OR STRIKING A DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS. IT CHOSE THE LATTER COURSE WHEN THE COMMUNISTS OFFERED TO SUPPORT THE GIUNTA WITHOUT DEMANDING POSTS IN IT. THE ONLY CONDITION THAT THE PCI ATTACHED TO ITS SUPPORT WAS DC ACCEPTANCE OF THE PCI AS PART OF THE MAJORITY.

2. THE SAN REMO DEAL, ALREADY TABBED BY THE PRESS A "MINI COMPROMESSO STORICO", IS CAUSING MUCH CONCERN TO THE REGIONAL DC LEADERS WHO FEAR ITS IMITATION ELSEWHERE IN LIGURIA. UNDER PRESENT PARTY STATUTES, HOWEVER, THE REGIONAL LEADERS CAN ONLY ADVISE AND ADMONISH, THEY CANNOT IMPOSE A SOLUTION, THAT AUTHORITY RESTING WITH THE PARTY'S PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE IN IMPERIA. THE LATTER IS SCHEDULED TO MEET ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27 AND IS EXPECTED TO RENDER A DECISION FOR OR AGAINST THE SAN REMO ACCORD.

COMMENT: IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT VENTO WOULD HAVE GONE AS FAR AS HE HAS WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCE OF SUPPORT FROM HIS PARTY'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROVINCIAL CHIEFTAINS IN IMPERIA. IN A LENGHTY EXCHANGE WITH ME ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, VENTO APING THE ARGUMENTS OF HIS ROME LEADERS, TRIED TO CONVINCE ME THAT HIS PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD WITH THE PCI DID NOT CONSTITUTE A POLITICAL ALLIANCE, WOULD REDOUND TO THE ULTIMATE ADVANTAGE OF HIS PARTY, AND AT ANY RATE, WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO BE IMITATED ELSEWHERE IN LIGURIA. I CONTINUE TO REMAIN UNCONVINCED ON ALL COUNTS. WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SAN REMO, IF ALLOWED TO STAND, IS FAIRLY CONVINCING PROOF THAT DC RETREATS BEFORE AND ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PCI IN ROME ARE BOUND, SOONER OR LATER, TO FIND IMITATORS IN THE BOONDOCKS. FOR WHAT IS SAUCE FOR THE NATIONAL GOOSE IS GRAVY FOR THE LOCAL GANDERS.DISCIUULLO

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## Message Attributes

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